

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 04981 01 OF 02 141458Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----013517 141507Z /50

O 141305Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2570
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 4981

EXDIS DIST AS NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, MPOL, MARR, PBOR, UNSC, IS, LE, XF
SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON: ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL

REF: A) TEL AVIV 4878, B) JERUSALEM 1070, C) JERUSALEM 1080,
D) STATE 95864

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1. I TOOK ADVANTAGE OF A MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER
BEGIN AND FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN MORNING OF APRIL 14
TO UNDERSCORE STRONGLY POINTS I HAVE BEEN MAKING WITH
DEFENSE MINISTER WEIZMAN ON NEED FOR AN EARLY AND PUBLIC
ISRAELI COMMITMENT TO COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL NO LATER THAN
END OF APRIL. (REF A). DESCRIBED GRAPHICALLY IMPENDING
POLITICAL FRACAS IN NEW YORK AT BOTH SPECIAL GA SESSION

ON UNIFIL FINANCING, TO BE CHAIRED BY AN IRANIAN, PLUS AN INEVITABLE OPEN FORMAL SESSION OF SECURITY COUNCIL, BOTH TO TAKE PLACE JUST AFTER WALDHEIM'S RETURN FROM MIDDLE EAST. SAID WE BELIEVED IT ESSENTIAL FOR ISRAELI GOVERNMENT TO MAKE FIRM PUBLIC COMMITMENT TO WITHDRAWAL TIMETABLE INCLUDING AN APRIL DATE FOR COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL IF THESE SESSIONS ARE NOT TO TURN INTO POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC DISASTERS FOR ISRAELIS.

2. I SAID THAT I WAS ENCOURAGED BY INDICATIONS OVERNIGHT THAT ADDITIONAL TROOP CONTINGENTS WERE ON THE WAY TO BOLSTER UNIFIL'S NUMBERS. SAID THAT BASED ON THESE REPORTS AND MY CONVERSATION YESTERDAY WITH GENERAL SIILASVUO, I FELT CONFIDENT THAT UNIFIL WOULD BE ADEQUATELY DEPLOYED UP TO ITS TARGET STRENGTH OR NEARLY SO WELL BEFORE THE END OF THE MONTH, AND THAT SIILASVUO AND HIS MEN WOULD THEREFORE BE IN A POSITION TO TAKE OVER IN AN ORDERLY FASHION FROM THE IDF WITHOUT "LEAVING A DANGEROUS VACUUM." (DID NOT RPT NOT MENTION NEW IRANIAN COMMITMENT, THINKING THAT BEST LEFT IN UNSYG CHANNELS AT THIS STAGE.) I SAID THAT I KNEW FROM WEIZMAN IMPORTANCE ISRAELIS ATTRIBUTE TO COORDINATING CLOSELY THEIR WITHDRAWAL WITH UN DEPLOYMENT, AND SAID THIS IS THOROUGHLY UNDERSTANDABLE FROM MILITARY VIEW. WHAT I WANTED TO UNDERSCORE, HOWEVER, WAS SEPARATE AND OVERRIDINGLY IMPORTANT POLITICO/DIPLOMATIC REQUIREMENT FOR ISRAELIS
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TO PUT THEMSELVES IN THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE POSITION PUBLICLY TO ASSURE INTERESTED UN MEMBERS OF THEIR INTENTION TO CARRY OUT THEIR COMMITMENT TO WITHDRAW IN AN EXPEDITIOUS FASHION.

3. BEGIN SAID HE HAD READ THE REPORTS OF MY MEETINGS WITH WEIZMAN, AND HE AGREED WITH WEIZMAN'S STATEMENT TO ME THAT ISRAEL WANTED TO COORDINATE TOTALLY WITH SIILASVUO ON WITHDRAWAL SCHEDULE SO AS TO AVOID LEAVING GAPS INTO WHICH PLO UNITS COULD REINFILTRATE. HE SAID HE WAS ENCOURAGED BY MY COMMENTS ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR FULL UN DEPLOYMENT THIS MONTH; THAT THE ISRAELI CABINET HAD TAKEN A FIRM AND CLEAR DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM LEBANON AND INTENDED TO CARRY IT OUT; AND THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THE

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 04981 02 OF 02 141902Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----017870 141907Z /50

O 141305Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2571
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AMEMBASSY JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 TEL AVIV 4981

EXDIS DIST AS NODIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

POLITICAL ISSUES I WAS DESCRIBING. HE DID NOT FLATLY
SAY THAT THE PUBLIC COMMITMENT TO A WITHDRAWAL DATE BY
THE END OF APRIL FOR WHICH I WAS PRESSING WOULD BE MADE,
BUT HE SHOWED SOME ENCOURAGING SIGNS OF RESPONSIVENESS
TO MY ARGUMENTS.

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4. DAYAN THEN SAID HE WANTED TO INFORM ME THAT THE
ISRAELI GOVERNMENT WOULD BE COMMUNICATING THROUGH THE
UN SECRETARIAT WITH ALL SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS AND
TROOP CONTRIBUTOR STATES ABOUT GO'S GREAT CONCERN ABOUT
ANY RETURN OF PLO UNITS TO THE AREAS BEING EVACUATED BY
THE IDF. HE SAID THEY WERE ALSO MAKING THESE POINTS

ORALLY TO THE AMBASSADORS OF THE INTERESTED STATES. DAYAN STRESSED THAT NOTHING COULD BE MORE DESTRUCTIVE THAN FOR THE IDF WITHDRAWAL TO BE FOLLOWED BY A DE FACTO UN "UMBRELLA" BEING PROVIDED UNDER WHICH PLO FIGHTING UNITS RETURN TO POSITIONS IN THE SOUTH FROM WHICH THEY COULD AGAIN THREATEN ISRAEL. THE GOI IS EXTREMELY DISTURBED BY SIGNS THAT THIS MAY ALREADY BE BEGINNING TO OCCUR IN THE NORTHEAST. HE MENTIONED THE SENSE OF OUTRAGE HE FELT AT HEARING OF PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE LEBANESE PRESS OF PLO FIGHTERS CARRYING AUTOMATIC WEAPONS SHAKING HANDS WITH "SMILING NORWEGIAN UNIFIL OFFICERS." DAYAN SAID THAT ONE OF THE GOI'S WORRIES IS THAT THEY HAVE THE IMPRESSION THE UNIFIL FORCES DO NOT HAVE CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS TO DENY ACCESS TO PALESTINIAN ELEMENTS, AND THAT THEREFORE A RETURN IS HIGHLY LIKELY. BEGIN CHIMED IN AT THIS POINT WITH A NUMBER OF COMMENTS ABOUT THE PARADOX HE SAID WOULD BE CREATED IF A UN PEACEKEEPING FORCE PROVED TO BE ONLY AN UMBRELLA UNDER WHICH THE PEACE COULD THEN AGAIN SOON BE BROKEN. HE ASKED THAT WE IMPRESS UPON ALL PARTIES THAT UNIFIL SHOULD NOT PERMIT PLO FIGHTERS BACK INTO THE AREAS UNDER THEIR CONTROL, AND MUST NOT PERMIT ANY ATTACKS AGAINST ISRAELI TERRITORY FROM THESE AREAS. HE CITED REPORTS THIS MORNING OF KATUSHA ROCKETS IMPACTING IN NORTHERN ISRAEL TO BOLSTER HIS ARGUMENT. I SAID THAT IT WAS MY ASSUMPTION THAT THESE ROCKETS HAD COME FROM AREAS BEYOND THE LITANI NOT UNDER UN CONTROL, SECRET

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BUT HE SAID "WE CANNOT BE SURE OF THAT."

5. I SAID I UNDERSTOOD FULLY THE ISRAELI CONCERNS ON THESE POINTS AND WAS SURE THEY WERE WIDELY SHARED. I DESCRIBED THEM IN SOME DETAIL THE MANDATE GOVERNING UNIFIL OPERATIONS AND THE WAY IN WHICH IT HAD BEEN ELABORATED BY THE SECURITY COUNCIL. I SAID THAT WE INTERPRETED IT AS GIVING CLEAR AUTHORITY TO UNIFIL TO RESIST ACTIVELY ANY ACTIONS WHICH WOULD LEAD TO A RENEWAL OF HOSTILITIES, AND THAT CERTAINLY WOULD INCLUDE THE KINDS OF PLO MOVES WHICH DAYAN HAD DESCRIBED. I SAID THAT WE WOULD DO WHAT WE COULD TO MAKE SURE CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS WERE GIVEN TO THE UN FORCES ON THE GROUND TO CARRY OUT THEIR MANDATE IN THIS REGARD.

6. COMMENT: I SENSE THAT WE ARE BEGINNING TO MAKE MORE OF AN IMPACT ON THE GOI WITH REGARD TO THE ESSENTIALITY OF A PUBLIC COMMITMENT TO A DATE FOR WITHDRAWAL. PERHAPS SOME PARALLEL EFFORTS BEING MADE BY OTHER GOVERNMENTS ARE BEGINNING TO HAVE AN EFFECT, AND I ASSUME OUR VERY USEFUL DISCUSSIONS WITH THE ISRAELI EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON ARE ALSO AN IMPORTANT FACTOR. WALDHEIM'S TRIP HERE

EARLY NEXT WEEK WILL BE THE IDEAL MOMENT TO TRY TO TIE
THIS DOWN. ALTHOUGH THE ISRAELIS WILL BE RELUCTANT TO
GIVE ANYTHING DIRECTLY TO WALDHEIM, IT IS EQUALLY UNPOPULAR
THESE DAYS HERE TO BE SEEN YEILDING TO AMERICAN PRESSURE.
THEIR MOST ACCEPTABLE FIG LEAF IS SIILASVUO, WHICH IS
WHY I ENCOURAGED HIM YESTERDAY TO JOIN IN THIS VERSION
OF THE "DATING GAME" MORE UNAMBIGUOUSLY.
LEWIS

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Message Attributes

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